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Business in Nebraska

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POPULATION CHANGES IN NEBRASKA CITIES AND TOWNS

Several interesting trends have emerged from the 1980 Census data which have been released so far for Nebraska. Previous issues of *Business in Nebraska* have focused on some of these trends at the state and county level, but this article will focus on some of the changes which are taking place in Nebraska cities and towns.

With the decline and apparent reversal of Nebraska's out-migration trend of the past forty years,[1] it becomes a matter of considerable interest and importance to look at the size and location of places in Nebraska which are gaining and losing population. Is it just the larger cities which are growing in size, or are smaller places able to maintain their populations or attract new residents?

Following the 1950 Census, *Business in Nebraska* published an article dealing with population trends of Nebraska cities and towns and continued to publish similar articles following the 1960 and 1970 Censuses. In these reports it was shown that there was a close association between community size and rate of growth. Generally, smaller towns tended to decline in population or grow less rapidly than larger towns.

Table 1 shows the number of places in Nebraska by size class for 1980 and each of the previous five decennial censuses. Although there are other methods for classifying communities by size, the method used in Table 1 allows for greater detail in classifying the smaller communities. Because this method was used previously, it also allows for comparisons back to 1930.

The data reveal that the number of places in Nebraska declined for the first time during the 1970s. Between censuses there always are a number of places which come into existence or no longer exist, but between 1970 and 1980 only one town incorporated, while six were either disincorporated (3), annexed (2), or merged (1) with another community.

Another trend evident in Table 1 is that, in general, the number of very small towns and the number of larger towns have increased, while the number in the middle group have declined.

The dividing line at the lower end of the scale seems to have remained at 125. The quantity of towns below this size has risen from 33 in 1930 to 96 in 1980. For the first time in several decades, however, this long-term trend was broken in 1980 as the number of towns less than 125 fell from 104 in 1970 to 96. The increase in the number of very small towns can be explained entirely by the decline of larger communities which have tended to drop into a lower class size with each succeeding census, rather than from the creation of new towns. In Nebraska, the minimum population required for incorporation is 100.

Between 1930 and 1980, the number of communities in the 125 to 999 range dropped sharply from 388 to 313. On the other hand, there was considerable stability in the number of places between 1,000 and 3,999 in size. In 1930, 89 communities could be found in this group, and in 1980, the amount was 90.

The dividing line at the upper end of the scale appears to have remained at 4,000 as each succeeding decade has experienced an increase in the number of cities larger than 4,000 in population. The 37 cities in 1980 were more than double the total recorded fifty years earlier.

Table 1 also shows the median and mean size of the cities and towns in Nebraska. In looking at the table, it should be readily apparent that the state has always had many small towns. This characteristic is emphasized by the median size. In 1980, the median-size place had 367 residents. (continued on page 2)

Table 1
NEBRASKA CITIES AND TOWNS
BY POPULATION SIZE CLASS

Population Size Class	Number of Places in Each Class					
	1980	1970	1960	1950	1940	1930
Below 16	2	2	1	0	0	0
16-31	8	11	5	2	2	0
32-63	25	25	25	14	1	2
64-124	61	66	62	60	42	31
125-249	104	111	116	116	125	116
250-499	121	123	129	137	154	163
500-999	88	80	88	91	102	109
1,000-1,999	71	64	62	63	57	64
2,000-3,999	19	22	20	31	28	25
4,000-7,999	20	23	16	12	10	8
8,000-15,999	7	5	8	7	7	7
16,000-31,999	7	6	4	2	1	1
32,000 and over	3	3	2	2	2	2
Total:	536	541	538	537	531	528
Median size of places	367	344	336	374	395	421
Mean size of places	2,132	2,073	1,808	1,606	1,466	1,429

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *PC80-1-A29, Number of Inhabitants*, and similar reports for preceding years.

[1] "Migration Trends and Patterns in Nebraska," *Business in Nebraska*, Bureau of Business Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, June, 1981.

(continued from page 1) In other words, one-half of all the communities in the state had fewer than 367 residents. Although 1980's median was below the value recorded in 1930, it represented the second consecutive decade in which the median increased.

The mean size of place has increased steadily from census to census, with a mean of 2,132 in the most recent census. Because of the way in which a mean is calculated, its growth is an indication of the previously mentioned trend in the increase in numbers of both the relatively large and relatively small communities in Nebraska.

Table 2 presents the median rates of population change between censuses for cities and towns by class size. It should be noted that for the purposes of comparison, the class size was determined on the basis of the population of a community at the first of the two census dates. The actual change in population for the entire state is shown at the bottom of the table.

The data indicate that a significant pattern that emerged in the 1970 Census became more prominent in 1980. Prior to 1970, population declines were experienced by progressively larger towns, with the magnitude of the growth or decline directly related to city size. Between 1950 and 1960 all size classes under 2,000 had more declining than growing towns. From 1960 to 1970, this was true for towns under 500, but between 1970 and 1980 only those classes with fewer than 64 inhabitants had more declining towns. Even then, the median rate of decrease was nearly five times smaller than it was ten years earlier.

In addition to the fact that almost every size class had more towns which grew than declined during the 1970s, the close, direct relationship between the rates of growth or decline and size class seemed to disappear. The median rates of increase were quite similar for classes larger than 250, and the 6.7 percent growth rate in the 500-999 class was the largest during the 1970s.

GROWTH OF SMALL TOWNS BY REGION

The previous section mentioned a turnaround in the population changes of Nebraska's smaller communities. It appeared to have begun some time prior to the 1970 Census, but gained momentum during the 1970s. Some indication of the geographic extent of this resurgence can be seen by observing the general location pattern of the towns which grew. In 1980 there were 409 Nebraska towns which had 1970 populations of fewer than 1,000 inhabitants. Of these communities, 247 experienced an increase in population. Thus, 60 percent of the towns under 1,000 grew between 1970 and 1980. This represented a sizable increase from the 44 percent which grew between 1960 and 1970. It must be remembered that this does not measure the total population but only the number of towns.

Table 3 shows, by region, the percentage change for the total population of each region and the number and percent of towns below 1,000 which grew between 1970 and 1980. In general, those regions which added population also had relatively more growing small towns. In all, 17 regions experienced population growth, and 66 percent of the towns under 1,000 in these regions gained in population. There were 5 regions which recorded growth rates exceeding 10 percent, and in these regions 80 percent of the small towns increased in size.

Even in declining regions, however, there was a sizable number of small towns which grew. Overall, more than half the towns

Table 2
PERCENTAGE POPULATION CHANGE
IN NEBRASKA CITIES AND TOWNS

Population Size Class	Median Percentage Change in Population 1970-1980	1960-1970	1950-1960	1940-1950	1930-1940
Below 63	-2.9	-14.3	-19.4	-21.7	+3.9
64-124	0.0	-3.6	-16.2		
125-249	+3.6	-5.1	-10.3	-14.9	-7.9
250-499	+4.8	-1.4	-7.6	-8.2	-5.9
500-999	+6.7	+1.0	-3.2	-3.0	-2.8
1,000-1,999	+4.0	+3.2	-3.7	+3.0	+2.6
2,000-3,999	+6.3	+12.5	+13.8	+11.3	+6.5
4,000 and over	+5.4	+11.7	+14.9	+16.7	+3.3
State percent change	+5.7	+5.1	+6.5	+0.7	-4.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *PC80-1-A29, Number of Inhabitants,* and similar reports for preceding years.

Table 3
POPULATION CHANGE OF NEBRASKA TOWNS
BY REGION, 1970-1980*

Region Number	Towns below 1,000 Percentage Population Change	Total Number	Number Growing	Percentage Growing
1	+6.1	4	0	0
2	+14.8	11	10	91
3	+26.2	3	3	100
4	+7.0	33	20	61
5	+6.8	11	8	73
6	-2.0	8	6	75
7	-8.2	23	10	44
8	+4.1	25	16	64
9	+2.6	17	14	82
10	+3.0	18	8	44
11	+6.3	18	11	61
12	+8.1	19	14	74
13	-2.5	24	12	50
14	-4.8	18	14	78
15	+10.3	9	8	89
16	+8.3	10	6	60
17	-1.8	20	9	45
18	+21.0	22	16	73
19	+8.4	10	7	70
20	+1.0	11	7	64
21	-10.8	7	3	43
22	+4.2	8	5	62
23	+12.1	5	3	60
24	-1.9	25	8	32
25	-4.5	24	13	54
26	-4.2	25	17	65
State Total:	+5.7	409	247	60

*The boundaries of, and counties included in, each region are shown on the map on page 4.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *PC80-1-A29, Number of Inhabitants,* and similar reports for preceding years.

under 1,000 in population grew. In fact, even the regions with the largest decreases (7 and 21) had more than 40 percent of their small towns gaining population.

The most dramatic small-town growth occurred in the South Sioux City area, where all 3 of its small towns grew; in the Lincoln area, where 10 of 11 grew; and in the Kearney area, where 8 of 9 grew. Other clusters of growing towns were Regions 5 and 6 (Fremont and West Point), Regions 9, 12, and 14 (York, Grand Island, and Beatrice), and Regions 18 and 19 (North Platte and Ogallala).

The data in the previous three tables seem to show that a large number of rather small towns are beginning to stabilize in terms of population size and in many instances have reversed the trend of previous decades and are beginning to grow. In the country as a whole, growth in small towns typically has occurred in metropolitan areas or in resort or retirement areas. In Nebraska, this trend is true around South Sioux City and Lincoln, but all four of the small towns in the Omaha area lost population. Besides, the 18 small towns in these areas are too few to alter significantly the patterns discussed earlier. In fact, if the data in Table 3 are changed so that the towns in the three metropolitan regions are excluded, the percent of growing small towns remains virtually unchanged.

THE URBAN-RURAL SPLIT

A topic that has received considerable attention recently, in both the popular press and in academic publications, is whether a rural renaissance has taken place in America during the 1970s. Data from the 1980 Census have verified that there has been a shift in the growth pattern of small towns, but there has been no strong evidence to indicate that the long-term decline of rural areas relative to large cities has been reversed. To understand this phenomenon fully it is important to know whether the growth in rural areas has been in exurbia (the semirural residential area beyond the suburbs of a city) or in areas unassociated with a large city. Table 4 presents data which can be used to examine the urban-rural growth pattern in Nebraska.

Prior to looking at Table 4, several terms should be defined. First, the Census Bureau defines the urban population as all persons living in places of 2,500 or more inhabitants or in the closely settled territory, incorporated or unincorporated, which surrounds a large city (sometimes referred to as "urban fringe"). The population not classified as urban constitutes the rural population. In 1980, 63 percent of Nebraska's 1,569,825 residents were urban and 37 percent were rural. Of the urban population, 91 percent lived in places (cities) and the remainder lived in the urban fringe. Only 41 percent of the rural population, on the other hand, resided in places.

The other definition of importance is that of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). Briefly, an SMSA is a county or group of contiguous counties which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more. In addition, to be included, the contiguous counties must be socially and economically integrated with the central city. Nebraska contains three SMSAs (two of which are shared with Iowa). The three SMSAs and the Nebraska counties contained in each are: Omaha, NE-IA SMSA—Douglas and Sarpy counties; Lincoln, NE SMSA—Lancaster County; and Sioux City, IA-NE SMSA—Dakota County. Together these metropolitan areas accounted for 44 percent of the state's population in 1980.

Table 4, then, contains data for (continued on page 6)

Table 4
POPULATION BY URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE
1950-1980

	Year				Percentage Change		
	1980	1970	1960	1950	1970-1980	1960-1970	1950-1960
Total	1,569,825	1,485,333	1,411,330	1,325,510	+5.7	+5.2	+6.5
Urban	987,859	912,598	766,053	621,905	+8.2	+19.1	+23.2
Inside places	901,587	885,288	733,595	610,547	+1.8	+20.7	+20.2
Outside places	86,272	27,310	32,458	11,358	+215.9	-15.9	+185.8
Rural	581,966	570,895	645,277	703,605	+1.9	-11.5	-8.3
Inside places	241,427	234,485	239,092	252,074	+3.0	-1.9	-5.2
Outside places	340,539	336,410	406,185	451,531	+1.2	-17.2	-10.0
Inside SMSAs	692,510	634,260	542,211	426,856	+9.2	+17.0	+27.0
Urban	634,150	588,292	481,585	372,074	+7.8	+22.2	+29.4
Inside places	547,878	560,982	449,127	360,716	-2.3	+24.9	+24.5
Outside places	86,272	27,310	32,458	11,358	+215.9	-15.9	+185.8
Rural	58,360	45,968	60,626	54,782	+27.0	-24.2	+10.7
Inside places	14,325	12,029	13,582	9,711	+19.1	-11.4	+39.9
Outside places	44,035	33,939	47,044	45,071	+29.7	-27.9	+4.4
Outside SMSAs	877,315	849,233	869,119	898,654	+3.3	-2.3	-3.3
Urban	353,709	324,306	284,468	249,831	+9.1	+14.0	+13.9
Inside places	353,709	324,306	284,468	249,831	+9.1	+14.0	+13.9
Outside places	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rural	523,606	524,927	584,651	648,823	-0.3	-10.2	-9.9
Inside places	227,102	222,456	225,510	242,363	+2.1	-1.4	-7.0
Outside places	296,504	302,471	359,141	406,460	-2.0	-15.8	-11.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *PC80-1-A29, Number of Inhabitants,* and similar reports for preceding years.

Review and Outlook

Nebraska's output declined 1.5 percent February-March 1982, according to the Bureau of Business Research's net physical volume index. Nearly all sectors were down on a month-to-month comparison.

Output from the agriculture sector was down 5.3 percent on a month-to-month basis. March 1982 cash farm marketings were valued at $525.6 million. Cash farm marketings were down more than $76 million February-March 1982. When compared with one year previous, March 1982 cash farm marketings were up nearly $87 billion.

Prices received for agriculture commodities by Nebraska farmers and ranchers were up 2 percent February-March on a seasonally unadjusted basis. When adjusted for seasonal factors, prices received were up 0.4 percent. On a year-to-year basis, prices received by Nebraska marketers of agriculture commodities were down 5.4 percent. This is slightly more favorable than prices received across the United States, where on a year-to-year basis prices were down 7.3 percent. Higher livestock prices are largely responsible for the improvement in agriculture prices and, since Nebraska is a large beef-producing state, this explains why Nebraska did somewhat better than nationally.

The nonagriculture components of the economy declined 0.9 percent February-March 1982. All sectors except government recorded decreases on a month-to-month basis.

Construction output declined (continued on page 5)

Notes for Tables 1 and 2: (1) The "distributive" indicator represents a composite of wholesale and retail trade; transportation, communication and utilities; finance, insurance, and real estate; and selected services. (2) The "physical volume" indicator and its components represent the dollar volume indicator and its components adjusted for price changes using appropriate price indexes—see Table 5, page 5.

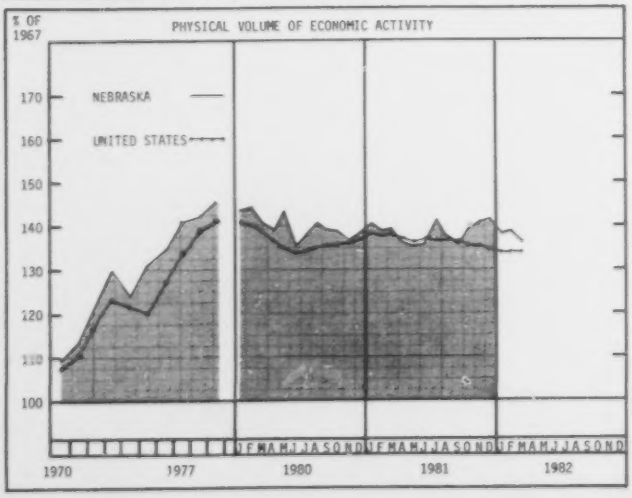
ECONOMIC INDICATORS: NEBRASKA AND UNITED STATES

1. CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

March 1982	Current Month as Percent of Same Month Previous Year		1982 Year to Date as Percent of 1981 Year to Date	
Indicator	Nebraska	U.S.	Nebraska	U.S.
Dollar Volume	102.8	103.0	103.4	103.6
Agricultural	121.3	96.8	115.2	99.7
Nonagricultural	100.6	103.2	101.8	103.7
Construction	66.7	92.4	71.6	91.2
Manufacturing	95.7	97.2	97.7	98.5
Distributive	103.0	105.9	103.9	106.3
Government	108.8	107.4	108.6	107.5
Physical Volume	98.8	97.4	99.1	97.4
Agricultural	128.1	104.4	124.8	108.1
Nonagricultural	95.3	97.2	95.8	97.0
Construction	64.5	89.3	68.8	87.7
Manufacturing	93.4	94.0	94.7	94.4
Distributive	96.4	99.1	96.5	98.8
Government	101.5	98.1	101.5	98.0

2. CHANGE FROM 1967

	Percent of 1967 Average	
Indicator	Nebraska	U.S.
Dollar Volume	365.7	358.3
Agricultural	355.0	318.8
Nonagricultural	367.1	359.6
Construction	211.0	307.8
Manufacturing	346.9	302.2
Distributive	388.6	398.0
Government	382.1	353.3
Physical Volume	136.4	134.1
Agricultural	143.7	132.3
Nonagricultural	135.2	134.1
Construction	63.2	92.2
Manufacturing	146.0	123.5
Distributive	137.3	140.6
Government	146.5	147.9

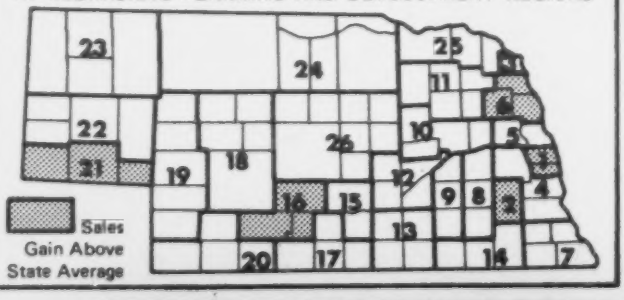


3. NET TAXABLE RETAIL SALES OF NEBRASKA REGIONS AND CITIES (Adjusted for Price Changes)

Region Number and City	City Sales*	Sales in Region*	
	March 1982 as percent of March 1981	March 1982 as percent of March 1981	Year to date'82 as percent of Year to date'81
The State	95.2	94.7	92.1
1 Omaha	99.6	97.8	95.6
Bellevue	80.5		
2 Lincoln	90.4	89.6	91.7
3 So. Sioux City	96.3	94.6	88.2
4 Nebraska City	96.2	90.3	86.9
5 Fremont	85.8	87.3	87.1
Blair	97.6		
6 West Point	99.8	94.1	93.0
7 Falls City	102.7	95.1	90.3
8 Seward	88.0	90.5	87.4
9 York	93.6	89.7	87.8
10 Columbus	120.2	106.0	86.3
11 Norfolk	94.6	92.9	89.3
Wayne	102.9		
12 Grand Island	90.3	88.2	84.2
13 Hastings	88.3	90.7	86.5
14 Beatrice	91.2	91.1	86.0
Fairbury	95.3		
15 Kearney	97.7	95.7	90.7
16 Lexington	108.2	101.9	93.0
17 Holdrege	80.3	89.8	88.3
18 North Platte	83.7	83.3	82.3
19 Ogallala	94.5	98.5	89.3
20 McCook	86.4	94.7	88.3
21 Sidney	112.4	100.9	96.9
Kimball	89.2		
22 Scottsbluff/Gering	95.5	94.0	86.8
23 Alliance	96.9	94.4	89.3
Chadron	94.0		
24 O'Neill	92.4	88.4	89.6
25 Hartington	92.1	91.1	90.1
26 Broken Bow	96.6	91.7	88.4

*State totals include sales not allocated to cities or regions. The year-to-year ratios for city and region sales may be misleading because of changes in the portion of unallocated sales. Region totals include, and city totals exclude, motor vehicle sales. Sales are those on which sales taxes are collected by retailers located in the state. Compiled from data provided by Nebraska Department of Revenue.

1982 YEAR TO DATE AS PERCENT OF 1981 YEAR TO DATE IN NEBRASKA'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGIONS



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(continued from page 4) once again February-March 1982. The index in March 1982 stood at 63.2 (1967=100). This is the lowest reading during the past three years.

Output in the manufacturing sector continued to slip in March 1982. The index is down approximately 5 percent from March 1981 and nearly 15 percent below the March 1980 level. The March 1982 reading stands at 146 (1967=100) and is the lowest reading for some time. A small increase in manufacturing output was recorded in February 1982, the first increase in this index since September 1981. Manufacturing output as measured by the index has moved erratically lower since July 1981.

Output from Nebraska's distributive trade sector declined 0.6 percent February-March 1982, according to the Bureau's physical volume index for this sector. The index is about 4 percent below the March 1980 and 1981 levels for the distributive trade sector.

Government was the only sector of the index to record an increase February-March 1982, with a 0.2 percent rise. The index stood at 146.5 in March 1982 and compares with readings of 144.4 one year previous.

March 1932 retail sales were down 1.9 percent when compared with one year earlier on a dollar volume basis. When adjustments are made for price changes, retaii sales were down 5.3 percent. The commodity component of the Consumer Price Index continues to reflect a slowdown in inflation, with the March 1981-March 1982 increase at 3.6 percent.

Nonmotor vehicle sales were down 1.4 percent March 1981-March 1982 on a dollar volume basis. When allowances are made for inflation, sales were down 4.8 percent. Nonvehicle retail sales totaled $689 million in March 1982, compared with $699 million March 1981 (unadjusted for price changes).

Motor vehicle sales were down 5.8 percent over the same interval on a dollar volume basis. When adjusted for price changes, motor vehicle sales were down 9.0 percent March 1981-March 1982. The actual values of motor vehicle sales were $82.7 million in March 1982 compared with $87.7 million March 1981.

Despite the general tendency toward lower retail sales, some Nebraska communities managed to record real increases (after adjustment for price changes). Retail sales at Columbus were up more than 20 percent in real terms in March 1982 compared with one year previous. Lexington recorded an increase of 8.2 percent and Sidney recorded an increase of 12.4 percent.

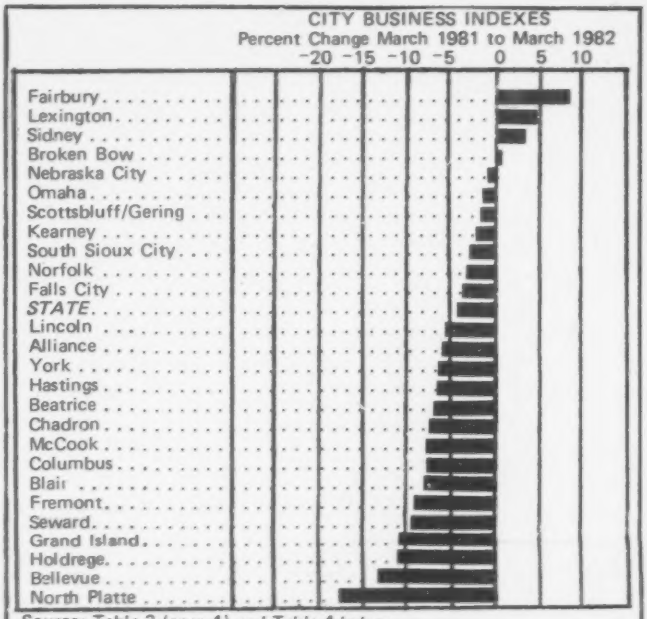
Strength in retail sales is also reflected in the Bureau's city business indexes. Cities recording increases above one year ago include Lexington and Sidney, where retail sales were strong. Fairbury led all cities with the largest year-to-year increase. Broken Bow also recorded a slight increase above one year ago.

D. E. P.

5. PRICE INDEXES

March 1982	Index (1967 = 100)	Percent of Same Month Last Year	Year to Date as Percent of Same Period Last Year*
Consumer Prices	283.1	106.8	107.6
Commodity component	258.8	103.6	104.5
Wholesale Prices	297.9	102.6	106.2
Agricultural Prices			
United States	241.0	92.7	92.2
Nebraska	247.0	94.6	92.4

*Using arithmetic average of monthly indexes.
Sources: Consumer and Wholesale Prices: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Agricultural Prices: U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Source: Table 3 (page 4) and Table 4 below.

4. MARCH CITY BUSINESS INDICATORS

The State and Its Trading Centers	Percent of Same Month a Year Ago: Employment[1]	Building Activity[2]	Power Consumption[3]
The State	100.2	58.0	114.7
Alliance	91.6	91.6	101.1
Beatrice	101.2	52.7	111.9
Bellevue	100.9	38.3	117.0
Blair	99.0	30.1	112.5
Broken Bow	99.4	151.1	112.5
Chadron	101.4	37.6	102.1
Columbus	97.4	49.3	120.1
Fairbury	98.9	841.6	112.5
Falls City	100.7	34.8	105.7
Fremont	99.4	64.0	101.9*
Grand Island	100.0	28.5	118.7
Hastings	103.6	59.2	214.6
Holdrege	97.3	71.2	108.8
Kearney	101.3	68.0	121.0
Lexington	100.2	125.3	97.8
Lincoln	103.3	59.8	109.2
McCook	92.4	159.0	106.3
Nebraska City	96.0	161.8	107.5
Norfolk	105.8	55.7	104.9
North Platte	94.8	20.3	102.9
Omaha	100.9	63.6	117.2
Scottsbluff/Gering	101.7	82.3	121.3
Seward	97.3	62.1	116.9
Sidney	97.7	66.2	115.0
So. Sioux City	100.8	78.6	118.8
York	99.4	55.8	122.0

[1] As a proxy for city employment, total employment for the county in which a city is located is used.
[2] Building Activity is the value of building permits issued as spread over an appropriate time period of construction. The U.S. Department of Commerce Composite Construction Cost Index is used to adjust construction activity for price changes.
[3] Power Consumption is a combined index of consumption of electricity and natural gas except in cases marked * for which only one is used.

Source: Compilation by Bureau of Business Research from reports of private and public agencies.

(continued from page 3) all of these areas defined above. In addition, the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan populations are further divided into their urban and rural components. The data began in 1950 because the urban-rural definitions differed prior to that time.

At first glance it appears that Nebraska's rural areas did not fare as well as its urban areas, since the rural areas grew at a 1.9 percent rate and the urban areas grew at an 8.2 percent rate. Upon closer inspection, however, a significant shift can be seen. The 1980 growth rate in urban areas is down considerably from the previous decennial rates of +19.1 percent and +23.2 percent, while the smaller rural growth rate followed two consecutive losses of 11.5 percent and 8.3 percent. Thus, even though the rural areas did not gain population in the 1970s as fast as urban areas, their relative position did not deteriorate as greatly as in previous decades.

Within rural areas, as might be expected from earlier sections, the number of inhabitants living inside places grew more rapidly than those outside places,[2] but given the size of their previous losses, the turnaround exhibited by these latter areas is much more dramatic.

Urban areas exhibited an opposite trend as the number of inhabitants within cities grew at a rate much lower than the previous decades, while the growth of the urban fringe was an astounding 215.9 percent. It is interesting to note that although the growth rate for urban areas exceeded that for rural areas, rural communities grew faster than urban communities, 3.0 percent compared to 1.8 percent.

[2]The rural population residing outside of places includes both farm and nonfarm residents.

The population data in Table 4 also are separated into totals for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. Between 1970 and 1980, the population within SMSAs increased at a 9.2 percent rate, while the population outside SMSAs increased at a 3.3 percent rate. Similar to the overall urban-rural pattern, however, the metropolitan increase followed two that were significantly larger, but the nonmetropolitan increase came after two successive losses.

Within SMSAs an interesting pattern has emerged in that during the 1970s the growth occurred in the urban fringe and rural areas, while the central cities of metropolitan areas actually lost population. Caution should be used in interpreting that loss, however, since it was due entirely to losses experienced by Omaha. The fact remains, however, that rural areas within SMSAs attracted new residents during the 1970s.

Outside SMSAs, the urban population added an additional 9.1 percent between 1970 and 1980, but the rural population dropped by 0.3 percent. The rural decline was concentrated in areas outside of places, as the population residing in towns increased by 2.1 percent while the population outside of towns dropped 2.0 percent. Compared to previous decades, both rural components did relatively better in maintaining their population.

To get back to the original question of whether a rural renaissance has taken place, the evidence for Nebraska is mixed. To be sure, a turnaround appears to have occurred during the 1970s as rural areas and areas outside SMSAs have reversed decades of population losses with either growth or slowdown in the rate of decrease in population. On the other hand, urban areas grew four times faster than rural areas and metropolitan areas grew nearly three times faster than nonmetropolitan areas. Furthermore, all of the growth that did occur in rural areas happened in metropolitan counties.

J. A. D.

NEBRASKA MANUFACTURERS DIRECTORY IS NOW AVAILABLE

The 1982-83 *Directory of Nebraska Manufacturers,* listing nearly 2,000 manufacturing firms in the state is now available from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The Directory is cross-referenced, and contains an alphabetical entry of all companies, a listing by community, and a product listing using Standard Industrial Classification numbers.

The price is $12.00–$12.42 with Nebraska sales tax, $12.60 in Omaha, and $12.54 in Lincoln, Bellevue, and North Platte. Mail check payable to Nebraska Department of Economic Development, along with name and address to: Department of Economic Development, Nebraska Manufacturers Directory, Box 94666, Lincoln, NE 68509.

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